

REMARKS

This paper is a Preliminary Amendment to the RCE Application filed in U.S. Patent Application number 10/721,859 responsive to a Final Office Action dated April 18, 2006 rejecting all of the pending claims 10-12 pursuant to 35 USC §103 based on both U.S. Patent No. 4,792,363 to Franklin, Jr. in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,478,342 to Berfield as well as Franklin, Jr. in combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,625,998 to Draudt et al.

The subject invention focuses upon a swivel cuff 147 having a base 148 and a collar 150. Base 148 is threadedly engaged to first end of a flexible vacuum conduit. This threaded engagement has been the focus of prior communication between the Office and the applicant. Collar 150 is rotatably attached to base 148 such that base 148 can freely revolve around collar 150.

Importantly, and the focus of the present Preliminary Amendment, collar 150 has an end section 200 that has a plurality of cut-outs (readily visible in FIG. 2) that are sized and shaped to engage raised ridges on exhaust flexible tubular conduit 129 (readily visible in FIG. 1). Claim 10 has been amended to encompass the above unique feature of the subject invention as follows:

... said swivel cuff having a base with a first threaded end for securing said swivel cuff proximal to said vacuum source and **a collar rotatable with respect to said base having a second end adapted to couple and uncouple said swivel cuff from said exhaust end of said flexible vacuum conduit by a plurality of cut-outs in said collar second end, said cut-outs sized and shaped to engage raised ridges on said flexible vacuum conduit...**

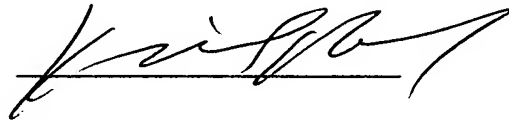
Applicant respectfully submits that none of the prior art of record, and specifically Franklin, Jr., Berfield and Draudt et al., disclose or suggest a collar rotatable with respect to a base, the two forming a swivel cuff, where the collar has a plurality of cut-outs at its end that are sized and shaped to engage raised ridges on the flexible vacuum conduit to which the collar is attached.

For these reasons stated above in combination with the above amendment to Claim 10, applicant respectfully requests that the subject application pass promptly to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



Keith D. Nowak
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 27,367
Carter Ledyard & Milburn LLP
2 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005
Telephone No.: (212) 238-8610
Facsimile No.: (212) 732-3232

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(Signature)

Phone: 212-238-8757